

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 088787
ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

66011

DRAFTED BY IO/UNA:BJSHARP

APPROVED BY IO/UNA:AFHOLLOWAY

S/S-O:DROBINSON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO RUTADR/AMEMBASSY DAKAR IMMEDIATE 5155

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 088787

EXDIS FOR AMB YOUNG FROM UNA

FOL RPT LILONGWE 0501 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO CAPE TOWN, DAR ES
SALAAM, LONDON, LUSAKA, MAPUTO, PRETORIA DTD 05 APR 78

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L LILONGWE 0501

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, RH, US, UK

SUBJECT: SHOULD WE USE BANDA TO GET TO SITHOLE

REF: LUSAKA 1144

1. LUSAKA'S INFORMATION INCORRECT IN THAT SITHOLE DID
COME TO BLANTYRE AS PLANNED. IN FACT, BANDA TOLD
ME LAST SATURDAY MORNING THAT FOLLOWING OUR CONVERSATION
HE WOULD BE MEETING WITH SITHOLE. ON THAT OCCASION I
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ASKED BANDA IF IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR ME TO MEET WITH
HIM WHILE HE IS IN LILONGWE THIS WEEK IN ORDER TO REVIEW
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AND GET HIS "PRIVATE ESTIMATE"
OF HOW WELL THE INTERNAL AGREEMENT IS ACTUALLY FUNCTIONING.
BANDA, WHO HAD STARTED TO LEAVE THE ROOM, RETURNED
TO HIS SEAT AND SAID TO ME EMPHATICALLY HE IS CERTAIN IN
HIS OWN MIND THAT SMITH HAS EVERY INTENTION OF LEAVING

THE GOVERNMENT AT THE END OF THIS YEAR AND RETIRING TO HIS FARM. HE SAID HE IS CONVINCED OF THIS FROM INFORMATION HE HAS RECEIVED FROM SITHOLE AND FROM HIS OWN INDIRECT CONTACTS WITH THE INNERMOST CIRCLES OF THE SMITH REGIME. HE INDICATED HE WOULD BE PLEASED TO TALK WITH ME AND I EXPECT TO SEE HIM HERE ON SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 8.

2. IN CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT BANDA YESTERDAY MORNING, BANDA MADE SAME POSITIVE ASSERTION TO BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER SCOTT WITH REGARD TO SMITH'S INTENTIONS. HE ALSO INDICATED HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE SOVIET BACKING BEHIND NKOMO BUT GAVE NO FURTHER INFORMATION AS TO THE NATURE OF THE BRIEFING HE WAS PRESUMABLY GIVEN BY SITHOLE.

3. WE THINK THAT BANDA'S DEEPLY FELT SUSPICIONS OF NKOMO, WHOM HE HAS KNOWN FOR MANY YEARS, AND HIS DISLIKE AND CONTEMPT FOR MUGABE AS A MARXIST RADICAL, ARE SUCH THAT IT IS UNLIKELY HE COULD BE PERSUADED TO TRY STRONGLY TO INFLUENCE SITHOLE TO ATTEND ALL PARTIES CONFERENCE. HOWEVER, IF THE BRITISH WERE OF A MIND WITH US TO TRY THIS TACK, A GOOD OPPORTUNITY WILL PRESENT ITSELF WHEN BANDA VISITS LONDON (APRIL 15-25) AND ON OUR PART WHEN HE VISITS WASHINGTON (APRIL 27-29). STEVENSON UNQUOTE VANCE

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